



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

24 NOVEMBER 2021

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Cupertino – Apple Suing Israeli Hacker-for-Hire Company NSO Group

(U) Tech giant Apple announced Tuesday that it is suing Israel's NSO Group to block the hacker-for-hire company from breaking into Apple's products. In a complaint filed in federal court, Apple said that NSO Group employees are "amoral 21st-century mercenaries who have created highly sophisticated cyber-surveillance machinery that invites routine and flagrant abuse." Apple said NSO Group's spyware, called Pegasus, had been used to attack a small number of Apple customers worldwide. The lawsuit becomes another latest setback to the hacking firm. NSO was recently blacklisted by the US Commerce Department and is currently being sued by social media giant Facebook. Security researchers have found Pegasus being used worldwide to break into the phones of human rights activists, journalists, and even Catholic clergy members.

SOURCE: 23 November 2021, [AP News](#)

(U) San Francisco – Criminal Charges Filed Against Nine People Involved in Organized Store Theft

(U) San Francisco's District Attorney announced his office had filed criminal charges against nine people involved in Friday's organized theft of a Louis Vuitton store, with more arrests to come. The District Attorney told reporters that the suspects would be charged with looting, grand theft, burglary, possession of stolen property, firearm possession, and commercial burglary. The robbery at the Louis Vuitton store was one of many such thefts that took place Sunday evening at various locations throughout the Bay Area.

SOURCE: 23 November 2021, [DailyMail](#)

(U) SOUTHWEST BORDER

(U) Mexico – 2,500 Living at McAllen-Hidalgo-Reynosa International Bridge Migrant Encampment

(U) Reynosa – A migrant encampment in the northern Mexican city of Reynosa has grown to about 2,500 asylum-seekers. With the onset of winter and several cold fronts moving through the area, multiple families are moving into tents together to get out of the rain and the cold in the somewhat cramped downtown plaza near the bridge. A source indicated that many parents had sent their children across the border unaccompanied out of desperation. Lawyers from a nonprofit organization traveled to the encampment earlier this month and spoke with parents about legal options for their children.

SOURCE: 23 November 2021, [Border Report](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) Maryland – Man Pleads Guilty to Distribution of Drugs Shipped Through the Mail

(U) Baltimore – Dwight Antonio Pitts, 47, pleaded guilty to federal charges for mailing 121 parcels of fentanyl, cocaine, and marijuana from California to Maryland. After wiretapping Pitts and another man, Michael Fisher, authorities seized 35-kilograms of cocaine, 6.5-kilograms of fentanyl, and about 50-

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kilograms of marijuana. Police also seized more than \$1.5 million that Pitts admitted was money earned from selling drugs. Investigators also seized 15 firearms from locations associated with Pitts and Fisher. The two men traveled to California multiple times to obtain kilograms of cocaine and fentanyl, and then mailed the narcotics back to Maryland for distribution using the US Postal Service.

SOURCE: 23 November 2021, [Capital Gazette](#)

(U) Virginia – US Jury Awards \$25 Million in Damages Over Unite the Right Rally

(U) Charlottesville – A US jury has awarded \$25 million in damages against the organizers of a deadly far-right rally in August 2017. In four out of six counts over the bloodshed at the Unite the Right rally, the defendants were found liable in Charlottesville, Virginia. The civil lawsuit was filed by nine people who suffered physical or emotional injuries in the rally. A woman was killed, and dozens were hurt after an avowed neo-Nazi drove a car into counter-protesters. In court, the jury awarded \$500,000 in punitive damages against 12 defendants and \$1 million against five white supremacist organizations. Punitive damages are awarded at a court's discretion to punish a defendant for conduct judged to be especially harmful.

SOURCE: 24 November 2021, [BBC](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Australia – Government Lists Neo-Nazi Group The Base and Hezbollah as Terrorist Organizations

(U) Brisbane – The Australian government will list the neo-Nazi group The Base as a terrorist organization, together with the Lebanese Shia political party and militant group Hezbollah. The home affairs minister, Karen Andrews, announced the plan to designate the two groups under Australia's criminal code, which outlaws being a member, providing support to or associating with listed terrorist organizations. The minister was unable to specify how many members each of the groups had in Australia, saying the numbers were "fluid." But she said the listings were based on advice about "real" and "credible" threats posed to Australia. The move follows long-standing calls for the government to list far-right groups after warnings from intelligence agency Asio about the growing threat they pose.

SOURCE: 23 November 2021, [The Guardian](#)

(U) Australia – Alleged Right-Wing Extremist Accused of Urging Violence Against Politicians, Racial Groups

(U) Tamworth – Authorities have charged Wade John Homewood, 37, an alleged far-right extremist in Tamworth, advocating terrorism and violence against racial minorities and political leaders. Counterterrorism police say they genuinely feared Homewood would inspire someone to carry out violence or terrorism because of his allegedly prolific social media posts featuring nationalist and racist messaging. On Tuesday, Homewood was arrested at his home in New South Wales (NSW) for using online platforms to urge violence against groups for their race, political views, and jobs. In September, the NSW joint counter-terrorism team, which involves the Australian Federal Police, NSW Police, Australian Security Intelligence Organization, and NSW Crime Commission launched a joint investigation into Homewood.

SOURCE: 24 November 2021, [Brisbane Times](#)

(U) Romania – Large-Scale Police Operation in Romania Targets Organized Crime Groups

(U) Bucharest – Romanian police officers and anti-organized crime prosecutors started a major joint operation on Wednesday morning, 24 November, to dismantle criminal networks involved in human and child trafficking, migrant trafficking, drug trafficking, and cybercrime. A total of 457 house searches are

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being carried out nationwide as part of this operation. The operation began early Wednesday morning and will attempt to document the suspects' criminal activity, recover the damages, and seize goods obtained from committing crimes. In addition to the 457 house search warrants, the law enforcement officers will also execute 367 arrest warrants.

SOURCE: 24 November 2021, [Romania Insider](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

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